

Racism: Umno to blame, not school principles, says DAP
Malaysiakini.com
September 6, 2010

DAP secretary-general Lim Guan Eng has called the education ministry's circular warning school teachers against making racist remarks as "irrelevant".

"If any circular or a warning were to be issued, it should be directed to Umno, in particular to its deputy president Muhyiddin Yassin who is also both deputy prime minister and education minister for failing to act and even condoning such racist remarks.

"UMNO leaders should refrain from racist politics before pointing fingers to others," said Guan Eng in a statement today.

He said that Muhyiddin had been tolerating racist behaviour among Umno leaders and members, it was of no surprise that racism had "infected" the civil service and education system.

Guan Eng was commenting on a education ministry director-general Alimuddin Mohd Dom's circular dated Aug 26 which warned educators of stern action for uttering racial remarks.

The circular was issued following public outcry over racial slurs against minorities by two principals at schools in Bukit Selambau, Kedah and Kulai, Johor several weeks ago.

Guan Eng said that the circular reflected serious problems with the education system which must be addressed immediately.

"The principals, teachers and other school staff should already know a long time ago, even on the first day on their job that uttering racist remarks is wrong, illegal and against the basic principles of their vocation.

"It is such a shameful situation where teachers have to be reminded that racism is both wrong and bad. What will the students think?" he asked.

Will Muhyiddin let culprits off?

However, Guan Eng said Muhyiddin and the government must be firm in its actions if they want to ensure that this does not recur.

"How can you reward the good if you can't punish the bad? If millions of our children and young people are learning that crime does pay, that you can get away with doing bad things; I fear for our future generation.

"Muhyiddin should stop playing politics and seriously think of the impact on our multiracial country. Racism is beyond party politics; it is a cancer that can destroy all of us, regardless of one's creed, colour and class," said Guan Eng.

Meanwhile, DAP vice-chairperson M Kula Segaran said that if the government was serious about Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak's "zero tolerance for racism" claim, the two errant principals must be handed a heavy penalty.

"The traditional practice of transferring problem school teachers and principal to another school will no longer be accepted as sufficient punishment. In fact, this is seen as merely

transferring the problem," he said in a statement.

He adds that the lengthy delay in action against the duo has also invited questions as to why the government was dragging its feet.

Copyright © 1999-2007 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd.
Source : <http://www.malysiakini.com/news/142060>